

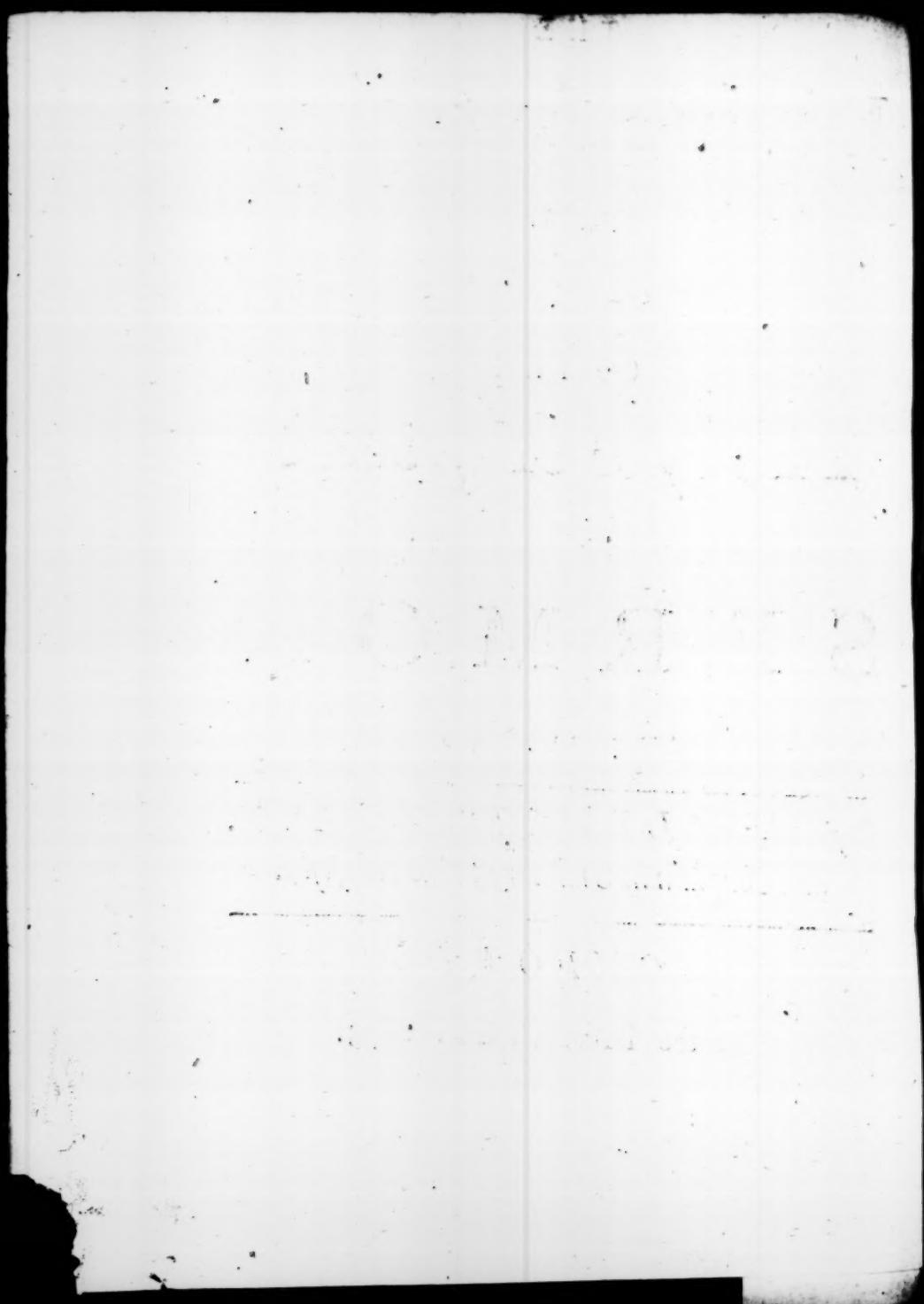
THE
Divine Authority
AND
USEFULNESS
OF THE
Holy Scripture
ASSERTED IN A
SERMON

On the 2. Timothy 3. 15.

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and Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty.

OXFORD

At the THEATER. 1673.





2. Tim. 3. 15.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

THE words are part of St. Paul's reasoning, by which he presseth *Timothy* to hold fast the truth he had receiv'd, and not let evil men, seducers, work him out of what he had bin taught: urging to this end both the autority of the Teacher, himself, who had secur'd the truth of his doctrine by infallible evidence; and beyond that, as if that were a more effectual enforcement, pressing him with his own education in the Scriptures; how he had bin nurst up in that faith, suckt the Religion with his milk, that it was grown the very habit of his mind, that which would strengthen him into a perfect man in Christ, and

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make

make him *wise unto salvation* if he did continue in the faith and practise of it ; which he proves in the remaining verses of the Chapter.

In the words read there are three things observable.

1. Here is a state suppos'd, *Salvation* ; and put too as of such concernment , that attaining it is lookt upon as wisdom ; *wise unto salvation*.

Now since true wisdom must express it self both in the end that it proposeth , and the means it chooseth for that end to be pursued with and attain'd by , and take care both these have all conditions that can justify the undertaking , and secure the prudence of it , and this wisdom to salvation therefore must suppose both these; in order to them both we have here

2. That which with all divine advantage does propose this end , and also does prescribe most perfect means for the attaining it ; and that is *Holy Scripture through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* *Thou hast known the holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* *Holy Scripture* probably of the Old Testament ; for there was hardly any other *Timothy* could know from a child , scarce any other being

And Usefulness of Holy Scripture. 3

ing written then. The faith of that then through the *faith which is in Christ Jesus*, that is, together with the faith of all things necessary to be known concerning Christ, is meant. Now since St. John, after the view of all that the other three Evangelists had wrote concerning Christ, adding his story also says, that Christ * *did and spoke more then what is written* ^{John 20. 30,} yet affirms most positively that *those things were written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing might have life through his name*; and so enough is written for that faith which is in Jesus that is necessary to eternal life: therefore the Holy Scripture of the Old Testament, together with the faith of what is written in the New, is that which St. Paul affirms is *able to make us wise unto salvation.*

3. Here is the advantage *Timothy* had above others as to Faith in these, and consequently the far greater obligation to continue in it. *He had known them from a child. And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scripture, &c.*

The first thing that does offer it self to our consideration is the state suppos'd, *Salvation*. But because my Text supposes it, I shall do so too, nor shall think it needful to prove here, that there is

such a state, nor consequently that all those are stupid, who propose not to themselves this everlasting safety for their main end, and by strict care in the duties of Religion and Gods service aime at it; for if that state be granted, nay if it be but possible, it must be granted that there can be no security but in doing so, nor consequently any wisdom without being *wise* thus *unto salvation*.

But then if this were granted, that the wisest thing man could propose to himself, were by strict care in all the duties of Religion to design Gods honor and his own salvation; still, as to the other part of prudence which consists in the choice of means, we are to seek for that Religion we are to pursue this end by and attain it; since there are so many and so opposite Religions in the world, that 'tis not easier to reconcile them, then to make peace betwixt enemies and contradictions. And it alwaies was so; for excepting that mankind agree'd still in the notion of the necessity of Religion, that all had apprehensions of invisible powers above us, and differ'd not much in the rules of Justice and Morality, in other things there was no nearness. Almost from the beginning there was more variety of Gods then

Nations

Nations, I had almost said then Worshippers. Beasts were their Sacrifices and their Deities, and therefore the votaries were certainly no better. Vices also were their worships; things which their Cities and their Camps would not endure, found Sanctuary in their Temples; and the actions which were whipt in the Judgment-hall, were their piety in the holy places. And tho some wise men among them found good reason to decry this, yet they knew not what to take up in the stead. I need not add the present differences of the world, even that call'd Christian too, great part of which as heretofore they seal'd their faith with their own blood, now seal it in the blood of all that differ from them; and by their persecutions hope to merit Heaven more, then those did hope to gain it by their Martyrdoms. But these I need not add to make up this into a demonstration, that it is impossible for lapsed men, so far as they are left to themselves, and have no other guide to follow but their reason, to find out what they are to believe of God, and how to serve him, and save themselves. The ^a Fathers and ^b Philosophers too; conclude that we can learn from none but God, what we must understand of God; who must be known only as he

^a Hil. 1. de Tri-
nit. p. 53, 54
^b Clemens Al.

Strom. 6. p. 675.
τοτε δικαιοιον
πλαστικαιον πα-
τει Θεον, η πατει
τον οικουν Θ
Οιον τοι αλλοιο
οικουσιν οιον
μηδεις οιοντι,
εικονα παρει,
τον θειον λογι-
ων τη μεροτελε
ιαλεγμανον την
αλιγιαν αναχ-
ριν εκπολιπονια
δια Θ υ ο Θεο.

Vid. Justin.
Mart. ad Diag-
netum p. 499. A-
thanas. ad Se-
rapionem tom. 1.

^c p. 191. 194.

^d edit. Par. 1672.

himself is pleas'd to revele himself. His worship also, how he will be serv'd, and what observances he does require, or will admit, since it depends on his own good plesure, therefore without his directions 'tis in vain to hope to please him with our Religious service whatever it be, and by consequence impossible without his guidance and assistance to acquire the end of all our Service and Religion, *the salvation of our souls*. So that how wise soever he be who does propose this blessed end to himself, if yet withall he be not some way from the Lord instructed by what means he must pursue that end, and do not make choice of, and use those means, it is impossible he can be *wise unto salvation*. Now for this St. *Paul* assures us most expressly, here we may be furnished: For he saies, *The Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus*. And he does assert this on the very ground we mention'd, for they are *Scriptures* inspir'd by God; they come from him. All which must be made out in the next place.

That those Holy Scriptures which St. *Paul* first mentions, those of the Old Testament were so, and did contain sufficient revelation both of God, and

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And Usefulness of Holy Scripture. 7

of the way of worship of the Jews, that Nation did so perfectly believe, that neither Sufferings nor Miracles could perswade the contrary; neither the Roman persecuters that destroy'd their worship, nor the Son of God that chang'd it, could yet take them off from *Moses* and his Scriptures. Now that this *Moses* led that Nation out of *Egypt* with an high hand, and made himself their Prince and Law-giver, multitudes of ^{Justin. ex Tro-} forreign Histories of the first times, and the best account assure us: whose ^{go. l. 36. Diod.} relations we cannot question as deriv'd from them- ^{Sicul. l. 1. Stra-} selves, because they hated Jews beyond all possi- ^{bo l. 16. Plinius} bility of such compliance. But the ^{30. Tacitus His-} ^{5. Joseph. contra-} ^{Apionem men-} ^{tions many o-} ^{thers.} ^{b Exod. 7, 8, 9,} ^{10. Chapters.} *Scriptures* also tell us, how in *Egypt* by strange wonders, (such as their Magicians could not imitate nor bear, who tho they had permission to do some, it was that so they might appear to be outdon the more miraculously, themselves confessing Gods hand in those prodigies) *Moses* wrought on the *Egyptians* to give leave the people should depart: and how when yet notwithstanding that leave given they were pursu'd, he made way for them through the ^c Sea by Miracles, which was a rampart and defence ^{Exod. 14. 21.} to them, a ruine to their enemies: How they were ^d fed for forty years with Manna raining down from ^{Exod. 16. 15.} ^{Deut. 8. 24.} Heaven

Heaven in the wilderness : and that they might depend on Providence for their daily provision, when he forbad them to take care or gather for the morrow, whatsoe're their greedines, or want of

*Exod. 16.20. faith provided, strait bred, worms and stank ; except that on the Sabbath eve, to keep off such cares from the day of their Religion, they gather'd double which corrupted not :

*Exod. 16.24. How when they mutined for flesh, would have variety ; Paradise in the

*Num. 11. 19. desert, such great plenty of ^c Quailes flew to them 20. 31, 32. as fed the whole Nation till their very lust was sur-

fetted ; and they had no more will then hunger to them : How *Moses* Rod did strike a living stream, a River that suffic'd that people and their cattle out

*Num. 20. 8. of a ^d Rock : How in the midst of lightning and 11. thunder God himself promulgated his Law ^e to the

*Exod. 20. whole Nation audibly at once : How his glorious presence shew'd it self in all necessities upon the Ark, in which the Tables of the Law were laid up :

*Josh. 3. 16. How the waters of the river ^f *Jordan* fled from that Ark both waies, flow'd upwards to give passage to the people into *Canaan* : How the walls of ^g *Je-*
^h *richo* without any other battery, any other force but that the Ark was there, fell down before it.

But to name no more, If these be true ; that

power

power by which these were wrought, was great enough to give that Law, require obedience to it, and reward it, and to punish all transgression according to the tenor of these Scriptures: that is, it was God; and he that wrote those Scriptures must have had communication with, and bin inspir'd from, God to write them. But,

2. Whether they were true or no according as they are recorded in those Scriptures; that whole people from the greatest almost to the least must know; because they are recorded as all don, not only in the presence of them all, but as the objects and the entertainments of their senses, every one; so that if they were forg'd, not one of the whole Nation could be ignorant of it. And then,

3. If they knew them forg'd all; that ⁶⁰⁰⁰⁰⁰
Num. 2. 32.
Num. 11. 21. men, besides their wives and families, should endure this *Moses*, having brought them forth only into a wilderness, there to lay such a heavy Law, and so severe a yoke upon them, with such penalties annexed to every least transgression; and adjure them to observe it on the account of all those prodigies that had bin wrought among them; and upbraid them with stiffneckedness, rebellion, and appeal to their own senses for the truth of all this,

and record all to posterity in this Scripture, cause all to be read before them; and that they should bear all this from him they knew so impudent a deceiver, and conveigh that Scripture and the faith of it to their posterity, ground their so strict, so chargeable Religion on that book, which they were certain had no word of truth in it: this sure transcends belief and possibility.

'Tis certain therefore, since the Jews of that age did perform the services requir'd, and in performing them according as that book directs, did teach their children the great works that God had don in their sight, therefore they believ'd those Miracles and Scriptures. And since it was impossible that they should be deceiv'd; if they believ'd them, they were true: and their posterity receiv'd from them the faith of this, and so deriv'd it on; that neither Gods dread judgments, nor mans cruelty can yet shake it. Now had they not bin don, and on that account conveigh'd; when ever they were broacht, and that book first appear'd, the men of that age must needs know their Fathers never had perform'd such services, had such a book read to them constantly, nor told them of such Miracles that had bin wrought: and therefore 'twas im-
possible

possible that they could have believ'd it had bin so from *Moses*, if it had bin true that it had first begun to be taught in their own time, or in theirs with whom they liv'd. And this discourse must be of force concerning every age, if we ascend until we come to that of *Moses* wherein all was effected. Yet besides this, they had also that perpetual Miracle in the High Priest's Pectoral, the Oracle of *Vrim* and *Thummim*, that did keep alive their faith and strengthen it: and they had Prophets constantly foretelling, as from God, things that were sometimes suddenly to come to pass, and sometimes not till many ages after, the event of which depended often on the will of those that would not of some hundred years be born; others on Gods own immediat will and hand: and therefore none but God could look into, foretel, and bring to pass all those events. Now such were *Jeremias* predictions of the taking of *Jerusalem*, and the captivity of the people, and the express number of^a years it would continue; *Esays* naming^b *Cyrus*, who was to releafe it, near two hundred years e're he was born; All *Daniels* prophecies, particularly that most eminent one of the^c *Messiah* this *Christ Jesus*, of whose Scriptures we are next to speak.

Jer. 25. 11. 12

Isa 44. 26. 2x.

28. & 45. 1.

Gen. 9. 24
&c.

That that *Jesus*, whom *Cornelius Tacitus* the heathen historian in the fifteenth book of his *Annals*, calls *Christiani dogmatis auctor*, the ^a Author of the Christian Doctrine, did work Miracles, and prophesy, both ^b Jews and learned ^c Heathens do confess. But these Books tell us, when he first began to preach, he publicly cast out a Devil in the Synagogue on the Sabbath day; and at even, when the whole City was assembled, he heal'd all their sick, and cast out many Devils, which confess before all, that

he was the Son of ^d God. Then he cast out a Legion of such mischievous malign Spirits, as having got license, drove two thousand Swine headlong into the Sea & choak't them, which was known to the whole Country of the ^e *Gadarens.* Before the Pharisees and Doctors, that came out of all the Cities both of *Galilee*, and *Jewry*, and *Jerusalem*, and so great a crowd as forc'd them to unroof the house to come to him, he freed one from his ^f palsy and his sins.

^f *Mat. 9. Mar. 2.*
^g *Luc. 5.*
^h *Mar. 5. Luc. 8.*

A multitude was witness of the death of ^g *Jairus's daughter*, and bewailing her laught him to scorn; that undertook to raise her, yet he call'd her into life. And on a feast day in the Temple, before all

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the people, he recover'd one that had lain lame
^b eight and thirty years : and when a widows son ^b John 5.
was carried to his funeral, and all the City follow'd
him, he only toucht the bier , and bid him ^c live. ^c Luc. 7.
With two fishes and five loaves he fed ^d 5000 men ^d Mat. 14.
besides women and children , and with what they ^{Mar. 6.}
left they fill'd twelve baskets , when one basket car-^{Luc. 9.}
ried all before they ate ; so that they were con-^{Joh. 6.}
vinc'd , he was that Prophet that was to come into
the world : and with seven loaves he fill'd ^e 4000 ^e Mat. 15.
afterwards and seven baskets. He comman-^{Mar. 8.}
ded a dumb spirit out of him that had bin ^f Luna-^f Mat. 17.
tic , vexed with a Devil from his infancy, before the ^{Mar. 9.}
people and the Scribes , whom his Disciples could
not cast out. And when ^g Lazarus had bin dead ^g John 11.
four daies , and buried till he stank , yet at his call,
altho bound hand and foot with grave cloaths ,
he came forth, all the multitude beholding. From
so many more I chose out these, because they are re-
ported don before the people, and the Scribes, and
Pharisees, and Doctors. I might name his ^a Proph-^a Mat. 24.
ecies of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the pro-^{Mar. 13.}
pagation and continuance of his Religion; even of
the womans box of ^b Spikenard, which event hath ^b Mat. 26.
m³de. ^{Mar. 14.} John 12.

made notorious to the world. But his death was so even at the present: when if the rending of the ^c veil of the temple was apparent Miracle to all Jerusalem, the suns prodigious Eclips, when it was impossible by nature he should be eclips'd (it being then full moon,) was so to the whole Hemisphere. It serves the use I am to make of this,

^c Mat. 27.
Mar. 15.
Luc. 23.
John. 19.

Phlegon apud Orig: contra Cels.
12. p.80. Euseb.
ad Olym. 202
ann. 4. Philop. ^d Georg. Syncel.
Thallus apud Africani. vid. Seal.
animad. ad Euseb. Chron. p. 186. ad ann.
2044. Etiam vide Juff. Mart.
p. 76. ^d p. 84. Tertull. Apol. c. 21. ^d p. de isto terre motu agere Tacitum
Plin. l. 2. c. 84. scribit Oros.
Mat. 281 Mar.
16. Luc. 29.
John. 24.
Mar. 16. 9.

when they relate that in the 4th year of the 202 Olympiad, the year that is assign'd to Christ's death, there was such a great Eclipse as never had bin, day at noon turn'd into night, the stars appearing, and earthquakes as far as Bythynia, since 'tis apparent by the motions of the Heavens and the calculations of Astronomy, there could be none such then according to the course of nature, it must be this the Gospel speaks of. But beyond all this, 'tis registred here, that according as he had foretold, he rais'd himself from death the ^a 3^d day; yea and many bodies of the Saints that had bin buried, long it may be some of them, he rais'd with him. That notwithstanding all the art and treachery of the Cheif Priests to conceal it, yet that very day he appear'd ^b First to Mary Magdalene,

dalēn, ^a 2^{dly} the Women, 3^{dly} ^b Peter, 4^{thly} to them
that went to ^c Enians, last of all on that day to the ^d ^{Luc. 24. 5.}
Eleven ^d except Thomas, being seen and handled ^b V. 33.
by and eating with them; 6^{thly} eight daies after ^c V. 13.
to the same eleven with ^c Thomas; 7^{thly} at the ^c John 20. 24.
sea of ^f Galilee appearing in a miracle of fishes; ^f John 21.
8^{thly} to all his Disciples and ^g 500 Brethren more ^g Mat. 28. 16.
in Galilee, then to James, ^h then to all his Apo- ^h Mar. 15. 6.
stles, promising them the ⁱ Holy Ghost; and last- ⁱ Ccor. 15. 7.
ly all of them beholding he ^k ascended into Hea- ^j Luc. 24. 49.
ven, and ten daies after as he promised sent the ^l Ho- ^j Act. 1. 45.
ly Ghost upon them in the shape of fiery tongues, ^k Act. 1. 9.
so as that they spoke all Languages immediatly, to ^l Luc. 24. 51.
the amazement of the Jews of every Nation un- ^l Act. 2. 6. 7. 8.
Heaven to which they were scatter'd, that
the Miracle might spread as far.

Now if all this be true, he that did these must have communication with a power above all that we account the powers of Nature; such an one most certainly as can perform whatsoever he in this book promises, inflict what e're he threatens; such as is divine. And since he wrought all these, on purpose to evince he came commission'd from that divine power, brought these Miracles as seals of that commission, that we might believe him, therefore

fore whatsoever he delivers must be embrac't by us, as we hope for those blessed rewards that he proposeth, and on pain of those eternal torments if we do not ; of both which it is not possible to doubt if these accounts be true.

2^{dly} Since the most and greatest of these must be don but once ; he could not be incarnated, and born, and live, and preach, and dye, and rise again, and go to Heaven every day, of every age, in every place, to convince every man by his own senses ; to all those that did not see the matter of fact, therefore faith of all these must be made by witnesses.

And

3^{dly} If we can be sure the witnesses that do assert a fact understand it exactly, if the things be palpable, and they must certainly know whether they were really don or no ; and if we can be sure too, that they are sincere, will not affirm that which they do not know, and do not lye, their testimony of it must be most infallible : because it is impossible such witnesses can be deceiv'd, or will deceive.

4^{thly} The witnesses in this case, the Apostles and the 70 Disciples (for I'lle name no more) must needs know most perfectly : For they not only saw

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the Miracles, but were ² instruments and parties in some of them; sent to cure diseases, cast out Devils, and knew whether all this were in earnest. And most certainly they saw (as all the Jews did too) Christ crucified, his heart peirc't with a spear, and his body buried; and whether they did see him risen, handle him, and eat with him they knew. And if they might mistake in his Ascension, yet the fiery tongues, if such did light on them, they must needs see; and whether they themselves, who spoke no Languages, could then speak Tongues, it cannot be but they must know. In these there is no possibility they could err, unless they did it wilfully: but then 'tis as impossible that they could do it willfully, if they were sincere and honest, such as would not lye.

Now that they were such, I might urge their simplicity and openness, without disguise, not covering their own errors; men who seem'd to live as well as preach against all artifice, and to have no design on any thing but the amendment and salvation of mankind. For he that can suppose it possible that they were otherwise, men of art and finesse, that they contriv'd the story, must needs know; First, that such would not seal

D their

^{1 Cor. 4:9}

their falsehood with their blood; design no recompence to all their travels but contemt, and hatred, persecutions, prisons, whippings, wounds and death, to be the scum and the off-scouring the world; lay out their lives against their conscience to preach that *Jesus*, who did only call them out to be a ¹*spectacle to all the world*, just such as Malefactors when expos'd to fight with, and to be devour'd of wild beasts. Their sufferings are too known to stay upon: St Pauls own catalogue of his for five whole verses 2 Cor. 11. is such, that to sustaint them only for this end, to put a cheat on mankind; count a so laborious, vext, torn, miserable life and an infamous death gain, so the fable might be believ'd: to think they could do this, is sure as great a madness as to do it. But yet I will suppose that possible; that those who wove the fable pleas'd themselves so infinitely with the expectations of imposing on mankind, as that those hopes could make misery and death it selflook lovely to them. But

Then 2^{dy} that all and every of them should be of that mind, that amongst so many that bare witness of Christs Miracles and resurrection not a man should discover the cheat; that when their persecutors

persecutors did with arts of torment as it were examin them upon the rack, they should work not one single confession out of them ; that no ones courage should be broke, nor have a qualm so far as to acknowledg how it was, disclose the plot, lay open the confederacy, the whole mystery and the contrivance of it : When of twelve Disciples one was so false to betray his Masters person at a vile rate , yet that all of them, and many more, in a feign'd story of his Miracles should be so true to one another, that no engin of mans cruelty ever could screw out the secret , not one should betray the forgery and be a *Judas* where he ought to be: no not that *Judas* , whose concern it was , whose treason to his Master had bin justified had he bin an impostor : yet that he should stir no least suspicione of it , but should burst, choakt with his greif because he had betray'd innocent blood: This , if he knew it had all bin imposture , must be most stupendous.

But yet we will give them this too , that vain-glorious hopes of drawing in the world to follow them , might make all of them obstinate in seceresy against all attemts of cruelty ; or if some

weak brethren did perchance discover, we may not have heard of it. But

For them ^{3^{dy} to begin their preaching at *Jerusalem* is yet more strange. To hope to draw men into a perswasion, and to bottom that perswasion upon Miracles, and a resurrection don amongst them there, where if discovery were made it must be made, and where it could not but be made if there were fraud. For to relate and write those works with every circumstance of persons, place, and time, where they not only could examin every circumstance, but where they rather then their lives would find them false, if nothing else would, this must needs discover it. They preach them to the face of the whole multitude and of the *Pharisees*, and tell them they were don before their eyes, somtimes 500. and somtimes 5000 being by and the *cheif Preifts* and *Pharisees* and *Doctors*: so that 'twas most impossible they should not know if they were true or false, as sure as there was never a Jew in all the Land, but knew whether there were a darkness over all the land when Christ was crucified. Now if these were forg'd to hope to draw *Jews* out of their Religion with apparent forgeries, which they}

they knew such, speaks these Apostles men so far from art to manage a design of changing the Religion of the world, that they were mad beyond recovery and preminent.

But let us give them that too. Yet tis certain 4^{thly} that the Jews, if any such were wrought on by them, must be much more stupid to believe them upon the account of such things don in all the country, in their Cities, and the Temple, before all the Nation, when they could not choose but know they were not don, if they were not don, but were fain'd all. For what ever might be motive to Christ's followers and his Apostles, with the certain danger of their lives to forge the cheat, what possible temptation could there be so great to incline *Jewes*, the most stiffnecked people, the most stubborn in Religion in the world, to embrace a faith which nothing but the Cross and shame and misery attended, and which they must know false too? Had they so great lust to dye, as for that to bid farewell to their *Moses*, their Religion and their Law? It is impossible had they not known the truth of those things, that in waters of affliction, in Jerusalem, *ipis persecutionum fontibus*, in that fountain, that springhead

The Divine Authority. of
of persecutions, as the Fathers call it, they would
ever have bin baptiz'd into Christ.

Yet suddenly in one day at one sermon of S^t
Peter we read near 3000 were baptiz'd. *Act. 2.*
at another strait 5000 *Act. 4.* and such begin-
nings, such sums are requir'd to make good what
the Governor of Palestine³ *Tiberianus* tells the Em-
peror, that he was not sufficient to put to death all
those that confess themselves Christians. All which
must needs have either bin convinc't those things
were true, or else as well against their conscience
as against the powers, thus embrac't that faith and
death together.

Neither was this a first surprize of Christianity,
as it had seiz'd mens minds at unawares; for it
went on conquering till the world came into it,
receiving the Religion with the losf of all that was
dear to them in this world. For in one age from
Christs death, what with the Apostles sermons, mi-
racles, and writings also to confirm and keep men

Whence Euseb.
says. l. 2. Ecc. hist.
c. 14. they at
Rome not think-
ing it enough to
have heard the gospel once πόντη τῇ ἀρχῇ τῷ διδασκαλῷ, not being contented with the
preaching of the heavenly doctrine while it was but an unwritten doctrine, earnestly entreat S^t Mark, that
he would leave in writing with them a monument of that doctrine which had bin delivered to them by
preaching. Nor did they give over till they had prevail'd; which when S^t Peter knew by revelation of the H.
G. γένος τῷ τῷ ἀρχῇ τῷ διδασκαλῷ being extremely pleas'd with that desire and their earnestness in it, He
approv'd it and appointed it to be read in their assembly.

and

and their disciples after them, who went forth
^b deliying those writings, preaching on, and
doing wonders also, very many Nations are record-
ed by Historians as converted almost wholly.
And the truth of it is evident, since nothing but
almost whole Nations, nor yet they but as buoy'd
up by the wonders and the graces of Gods spirit,
ever could be able to endure, or be sufficient to
employ the Swords, the Flames, the Lions, and
the other numberless tortures which the *Jews* and
Nero and *Domitian*, and above all *Trajan* in that first
age rag'd with, till they made their Cities, vil-
lages and provinces so desolate, that the Proconsul
Pliny, being frighted with the multitude of mur-
der'd Christians, did advise with him about re-
laxing his edicts, as he himself ^a assures us.

^bEuseb. l. 3. c. 37.

^aI. 10. Epist. 97.

It was the same the next age, when the power
of Miracles ^b yet liv'd, and those which Christ
himself wrought were scarce all dead, (some ^c liv'd
till near that time, who rose up with him at his
resurrection;) when these ^d books, (writ by the will
of God to be the pillar and foundation of mens
faith in after ages, as saith ^e *Irenaeus* in that age,) were
also read in the assemblies weekly; when
not only those that did assemble were by ^f Ha-
drian

^bJust. Mart. dia. 1.
cum Tryph. Ia-
deop. 247, 302.
311. Iren. l. 2. c.
56. 57.

^cExcerpt. ex
Quadrat. Apolog.
ad Hadrian. a-
pud Eus. l. 4. c. 3.
^dJust. Mart. A-
pol. 2. p. 98.
^eIren. 3. c. 1. 1.

⁴ *Just. Mar. A.*
pol. 2. *Ecl.*

Smyrnens. apud
Euseb. l.4.c.15.

Ecclesiast. Vi-
ennen. & Lug.

thun. comment.
de passione Mar-

tir. sive rum a-
pid Euseb. l.5.c.

^{1.} *& Niceph.*
l.3. & 4.

² *Orig. cont. Cel.*
l.2. p. 62. & p.

³ *Co. Tertul. A.*
pol.c.23.

⁴ *Niceph. l.5.*
c. 29.

⁵ *V. Euseb. l.6. &*
7. jere integros.

de Sev. Sparti-
an. & Tertul.

de Decio S. Cypr.
Euseb. l.8.c.2.

c.6.Niceph.l. 7.

e.6.Euseb.l.8.c.

11. &c.9. Sulp.
Sev.l.2. Oros.l.

7.c. 25. Ignatii
Patr. Antioch.

literas. apud
Scalig. de mend.

temp.l5.p.496.
Spond. ad annum

302 n. 4.

drian martyr'd, but they put men to their oaths, to find out whether they were Christians, that they might massacre them.

And in the 3^d, it was the like, when Miracles they say were not yet ceast, yet sure the greatest was the constancy of Christians in adhering to this book & patience in suffering for it. For they report the hands on the sea shore almost as easy to be numbered as the Martyrs of that age; what by ³ *Valerian*, *Decius*, *Maximinus* and *Severus*, but especially by ⁴ *Dioclesian*, who put so many men to death for not delivering up their Bibles to be burnt, and refusing to Sacrifice to his Gods, as if he meant to have depopulated the whole earth. And this is as notorious as that men do now profess that they are Christians, and that these are holy Scriptures. Therefore I shall need to go no further.

Now among so many myriads who on the account of all these Miracles (whate're they were) suffer'd themselves to be converted to the faith of Christ, and then as if they car'd for nothing but Religion and their Bibles, for them bore the loss of goods, and life it self, and engag'd their posterity to do so also; that not one of these should know whether indeed any such miracles were wrought,

wrought, if any were restor'd to life or no: (for if they knew, then they were true:) and that among so numberless a crow'd of teachers, who by assuming to speak languages, raise the dead, work signs, drew in those Myriads to Religion and the stake, and went before them, gave them an example both in faith and death; that not one of all those should believe either the Miracles or himself that did them: for if any one that did them did believe them, since he knew who did them, they must needs be certaine but not one of them to know it, sure is such a thing as neither could bedon nor be imagin'd.

He therefore that requires stricte evidence in things of faith which cannot bear it, he that calls for Mathematical demonstration, nor will believe on easier terms, yet is so credulous and so unwary, that he can believe so many things which by the nature and the disposition of mankind I have demonstrated not possible, which yet must be true, unless these scriptures be from God: 'tis plain he does not seek for certainty, but for a pretence of not believing; would fain have his Infidelity and Atheism look more excusable, and is not fit to be disputed with but to be exploded.

E

But

But if these scriptures be from God, then whatsoever they affirm (with modesty I may conclude) is true. And therefore when S^t Luke *Act. 1. 1.* declares his former treatise contain'd all that Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which he was taken up : since Christ before he did ascend taught every thing that was requir'd to be believ'd and don in order to salvation, and more too ; therefore if his Gospel did contain all that he taught, and did, since it did not contain all absolutely, it must needs mean it contained all that was necessary, or it must mean nothing. And since

Luk. 1. 4. the same S^t Luke in the beginning of that Gospel does affirm he wrot it, that *Theophilus might know the certainty of those things wherein he had bin instructed*; Tis plain he avers that the certain knowledg of all those things wherein the having bin instructed made *Theophilus* a Christian, might be had out of that Gospel: and when S^t Paul says here, that *the Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*, and S^t John in his 20 chap. v. 31. *that tho be had not wrot all the things that Jesus did, yet those that he had wrot were written, that we might believe that Jesus was the Christ the son of God, and that believing*

lieving we might have life through his name ; Tis evident the Scriptures say that what was written was sufficient to work that belief which was sufficient to life and salvation , as far as the *credenda* do concur to it. And when S^t Paul in that verse that succeeds my text, in most express particular words sets down the usefullness of Scripture in each several duty of a man of God, or preacher of the Gospel, both for *Doctrine* of faith, for *reproof* or *correction* of manners , and *instruction unto righteousness* , and tells you Gods express end in inspiring it , and consequently its ability when so inspir'd was, *that the man of God might be made perfect*, throughly *furnished unto every good work* that belongs to his whole office ; tis most certain that what is sufficient for that office to *instruct, reprove, correct and teach in*, must needs be sufficient to *believe and practise in* for all men : i. e. what my text affirms , they are able to make us wise unto salvation.

I might call in Tradition universal to bear witness to this truth for holy Scriptures, if having once demonstrated that they are Gods word, when that does affirm it, and bears witness to it , there were need of any other. And this I dare

boldly say, that if the Scripture did say as expressly, that the Pope had a supremacy or soveraignity over the whole Church, or that he or the Roman Church were infallible; their definition, or the living voice of their present Church, a most sure rule of Faith, as it does say Scripture *is able to make us wise unto salvation*, those Articles would suffer no dispute, it would be blasphemy or sacriledg to limit or explain them by distinctions, when those sayings of the perfectnes of Scriptures are forc't to bear many. Then we should have no complaints of the obscurity of those books; if those articles were either in the Greek or Hebrew, they would never say the Bible were not fit to be a Rule of Faith, because the Language were unknown to the unlearned, and they could not be infallibly secure of the Translation; were they there they would account them sure enough, who think them plain enough already there, and that we must believe them because, *Thou art Peter, Feed my sheep, and Tell the Church*, are there.

And for him that shall affirm, all necessaries that must make us *wise unto salvation* are not in the Scripture, 'tis impossible to give a rational account

count how it should come to pass that some are there, the rest are not.

It must be either on design, or else by chance. Now 1. That God should design, when very many things that were not necessary were to be written, that the main and fundamental ones should be omitted: and when of the necessaries most he did design for Scripture, then He should not suffer the Apostles to write the remainder of them: and yet what he would not suffer them to write, design'd that the Trent Fathers (who I hope have perfected the Catalogue) should write all: of these since 'tis not possible to give a reason, 'tis not therefore rational to affirm it was upon design. But

2. If he shall say it only happen'd so by chance, he does affront both Scriptures, and Gods' Holy Spirit, who, as they affirm, inspir'd them for this very end, to bring men to the faith and to salvation. But there is no place for chance in those things that are don in order to an end, by the design, impulse and motion of the infinit wisdom of Gods' holy Spirit. He certainly does most unworthily reproch his Maker, who can think it possible, that what he did design expressly and on

that account alone to attain such an end by (namely that men should believe and be sav'd) and inspire it for that purpose, should yet fail, not be sufficient for that purpose. And sure if it be sufficient it contains all necessaries, otherwise it were deficient in the main; yea so clearly also, as that they, for whose salvation they are intended, may with use of such methods, as are obvious and agreed upon by all men, understand them: for otherwise they could not be sufficient: if men could not be instructed by them in things necessary both to faith and life, they could not *make them wise unto salvation*.

I must confess the Scripture labors under a great prejudice against this doctrine, from the different senses and interpretations that are made of it, even in the most fundamental points, by them that grant it is the word of God; when yet all use the same means to find out the meaning, and no doubt they seek sincerely after it. But yet I think it evident this happens not from the obscurity of Scripture, since it is not only in the most express texts; but also if you should suppose the doctrins were as plain set down there as words can express them, yet there are such principles assum'd into the faith of different sects, as must oblige them

to

to interpret diversly the same plain words. I am not so vain as to imagin that no places are obscure in Scripture, and I know that learned men have arts by obscure places to confound the plainest, just as the Philosopher did motion. Neither am I so perverse and singular not to think that universal practise and profession of the Church does much assure and confirm explications of Scriptures, whether obscure or plain. But this I say, that the diversities of explication come, as I now said, from the diversity of principles or rather prejudices, and that this only is the cause of it I thus demonstrate.

First in the *Socinian*, who interprets all those Scriptures, which the Catholic world hath still apply'd to the Divinity and satisfaction of Christ, that I name no more points, otherwise then the Church did alway; and I affirm he does it, not because he thinks the words do favor his interpretation, but because his principle requires it; namely this, To admit nothing into his faith but what agrees with that which he counts reason, which in a *Socinian* faith is judge of all points in the last resort. And I mean reason upon natural principles, and thus I prove it. *Socinus* speaking of Christ's

Christ's satisfaction, says the word is not in Scripture, ² yet if it were there very often I would not believe it, because it does not consist with right reason, that is with the arguments that he had brought against it drawn from human principles. And therefore he there adds; those things which 'tis apparent cannot be, (*i. e.* that appear such to him who judges by the principles of natural reason, which yet cannot judg of supernatural and infinite beings,) tho the Holy Scripture does expressly say they are, yet must not be admitted; & *idcirco sacra verba in alium sensum quam ipsa sonant per inusitatos etiam tropos quandoq; explicantur:* and for this reason we make use of even unusual tropes, strain'd figures to explain the words of Holy writ to other senses then the words themselves import. And so he therfore serves that great variety of words by which the Scripture does express Christs suffering *for our sins*, in our stead, as our sacrifice; against the universal notions of those words, not only which the Church of Christ, but which the Jew's and which the heathen world had of them. And when his reason told him that Christ could not be *God one with his Father*, that he was so far from having any being from eternity, as that

Ego quidem etiam si non semel sed sepe id in sacris monimentis scriptum extaret, non idcirco tamen ita rem pro�us se habere crederem. Soein. de Jesu Chr. Servatore parte 3 c. 6 operum tom. 2. p. 204.

that he was not at all, till he had a being from the Blessed Virgin; Therfore when the Scripture saies directly ^a *I and the Father are one*, he must strain it to this meaning, are of one mind, we agree in one: altho St John avert that, by distinguishing those two expressly. Yea worse, when to prove that Christ had a being e're the world was made, we urge from the first Chap. to the ^bHebr. what St Paul produces from the ^cPsalms, and does apply to him most particularly. *Thou Lord in the beginning hast lai'd the foundation of the earth*, and ^{12.}
^d*Psal. 102. 25.*
^{26. 27.} the Heavens are the works of thine bands; they shall perish, but thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as does a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. They explain it thus: that God by Christ will at last destroy these Heavens, and this Earth, and change them, according to that saying in the Psalms; which altho the Apostle produceth at length, as it stood there, both concerning the *Creation* and *destruction* of the world, yet he intended only to apply this last to Christ. And thou he say as well of the same Lord, *Thou Lord in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine bands;*

as, *thou shalt change them*; yet he meant no more but that this change God would effect by Christ. It is not possible that the text can give any the least countenance to this interpretation. The different explication of this Scripture does not come from the obscurity of any words in it; for in the *Psalm* they and we understand the same words in the same sense exactly: therfore that we differ here, is not from anything in the words quoted, but is wholly from the Principle. And we may not wonder, for the plain sense will not sute with their Hypothesis.

There are no other that are instanc'd in as differing from us in points of faith but the Romanists. I know not whether they account those differences to be in things necessary to salvation.

¹The reasonable-
ness of this sup-
position might
be demonstrated
if there were
any need of it. If that be true that they allow (for what cause they know best,) some that are reconcil'd to their Church to communicate with ours, that is, join in our worship, and by doing so own the profession of our faith in distinction to that of others, or at least espouse the scandal of the owning it; Then one would think they must account that there is nothing in our worship don that is unlawful, nor omitted that is necessary, nor any thing Heretical

cal protest, at least that there's no scandal in the owning that profession. For if there were, they did allow them only to profess and act gross sin, which certainly they would not do. So that poor Protestants when they are pleas'd to give leave may be no Heretics, and therfore there is nothing of it self in that profession faulty. But yet on the other fide since we see they call us Heretics, and when they have no power over us, damn us to Hell fires, and when they have had power, damn'd us to the fire and fagot also; sure they think the differences to be in things necessary. But yet the account is easy, how not the obscurity of Scripture, but a Principle or prejudice does cause this. For We are bound in conscience to grant they believe their own Principles. Now 'tis a Principle with them, that their Church cannot erre, and therfore that their present faith and consequent depending practise was their faith and practise alwaies. That it may appear so, they must seek for countenance from Scripture: and if any thing there seem to thwart their faith or practise, they must smooth and disguise it, that it may look friendly. And 'tis most certain if the Scripture should be never so express against them, whilst they think it is not

L. i. de Sanctis.
B. 1. c. 17.

possible that they can err, they cannot think it possible Scripture can mean what it pretends to speak. Twere easy to make instances. As first for invocation of the Saints departed, which with them is a point of faith, *Bellar.* and *Cochleus* produce that of the Psalms, *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.* Psalm. 121. 1. and altho the text directs that looking up expressly to the *Lord that made heaven and earth.* v. 2. and tho it be a Principle with them, that on those everlasting hills there were no Saints in *Davids* time that could be invocated, they were all in *limbo* then they say; yet as I said, they would have countenance from Scripture, and for want of better they are therefore forc'd to interpret those words, *I will lift up mine eys unto the Hills,* thus, *I will invoke* the Saints. Now will any say 'tis the obscurity of this Scripture that does hinder Protestants from seeing the bright evidence of this argument, and not rather that it is the weak foundation of this practice that does make the Romanists seek to build it on those mountains? So among those several texts which in the 2^d Nicen general Council are produc't for adoration of the images of Christ and of the Saints, and are expounded to evince

evince it, none is plainer then that which I produced now from Bellarnin. I shall give one or two examples from the Psalms : ^a *Thy face Lord* ^{Psal. 27. 8.}
will I seek: ^b and, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy* ^{Psal. 4. 6.}
countenance upon us : and again, ^c *the rich among the* ^{Psal. 45. 12.}
people shall entreat thy face: therefore David thought the picture of Christ was to be ador'd. It is their own ^d conclusion from these texts, And they have ^d *Concil. tom. 18.*
p. 295. no better for it. Yet they saw the doctrine in these so apparently, as that with great opposition to great Councils, and more blood shed: I think then yet ever any doctrine hath bin settled with, it was impos'd. Yea more, the first experiment of the Popes power over Sovereign Princes was on the account of this same doctrine: when for opposing Image-worship *Gregory the 2^d* excommunicated the Greek Emperour. Pope ^{*Sigen. de regno Ital. ad annum 712. l. 3. p. 103.} *Constantine* for the same cause indeed had 14 years before don so to *Philippicus*, but he did not go much further, where as *Gregory* absolv'd the Emperors subjects in the Roman Dutchy from their Allegiance; commanded them not to pay him any tribute, nor in any wise obey him; whereupon they ^a kill'd their Governors, and ^b swore

^a *ni sacramento se Pontificis vitam statimq; in perpetuum defensuros, atque ejus in omnibus rebus autoritati obtemperaturos jurarunt. Ita Roma Romaniq; ducatus a Gracis ad Romanus Pontificem pervenit. Sigen. de Regno Ital. ad annum 727. l. 2. p. 105.*

F. 3

obedience.

obedience to the Pope. And this was the beginning of St Peters patrimony, and it was thus gotten by this doctrine, which they saw so clearly in these Scriptures; when they cannot see the contrary in those plain words, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any whether Graven image or idol it matters not, since it follows, nor the likeness of any thing which is in heaven above, &c.* nor in those where God takes care expressly that himself be not worship't by an image *Deut. 4. 15.* and then judg if 'tis obscurity or plainness that makes them see or not see doctrines in the Scripture: rather if it be not meerly the necessity of prejudice. So again we differ in the meaning of the 14th chap. of the *1. Cor.* where we think St *Paul* asserts and argues, yea and chides against all service in an unknown tongue in the public assemblies, saying all must be don there so as it may be ^cunderstood, and to edification. But that which is perform'd there in an unknown tongue does not ^dedify says he there: yet to justify this practice they must make it have

^c *1 Cor. 1. 5.*
12. 19. 2c.
^d *V. 6. 14. 16. 17.*
* *Basil. Mag. in reg. brevior. interrog. 278. Tom. 2. p. 641.*

a different meaning, which no Fathers countenance, but which *several expound as we do, yea

Theodor. & Cæcumen. in locum &c. and the commentary under St *Ambrose's* name makes these who in the Church of Corinth would use an unknown tongue in their sacred offices, (against whom St *Paul* directs his speech, and takes occasion for that which he saies in this chap.) converted Hebrews; who would it should seem perform the service or at least some parts of it in the Christian Assemblies, as they had bin don of old in the Synagogues, in the Hebrew tongue, which the Corinthians understood not, against which St. *Paul* disputes.

and diverse of their own do so too, and particularly their Pope *John 8th* in his *247th* Epistle <sup>Conc. tom. 24.
p. 287.</sup> writing expressly on that Subject. Once more, so their half communion, that it may be reconcil'd with that express command ^b *Drink yee all of it:* and ^{b Mat. 26. 27.} *this do*, obliges them to find another meaning: *drink ye all* must be directed to them only as Apostles; and *do this* must signify consecrate the Elements, altho *S^t Paul* apply it most directly to the drinking, and the drinking to his lay ^{1 Cor. 11. 25.} *Corinthians*. Nor dare they say in truth it means the other, for *S^t Paul* when he does say *do this*, did not intend to make his *Lay Corinthians* male and female. ^{c Yet the Counc. of Trent Sess. 22. c. 9. can. 2. pronounces Anath.} all ^c priests, and give them power to consecrate. The words are plain, ther's nothing in the text obscure that makes us differ; but the practise had by little & little grown upon them, till it became Universal, ^{margin out of this place 1 Cor. 11 did not constitute priests, and ordain that they should offer the body and blood of Christ.} and so grew into their faith: and then since they believe they cannot erre, they must expound Christ's words so as they may not contradict their practise; because that would overthrow their Principle.

But the Church that builds upon no Principle but Gods word, can have no temptation to pervert or strain it, since what ever does appear to be the meaning,

meaning of it, that their Principle must needs engage them to believe. And therfore ifit say *This is my body*, we believe it; if it saies too after consecration it is *a bread*, we believe that also: and because it therfore says 'tis both, we so believe it one that it may be the other: which since both say it is impossible that it can be substantially, neither hath God in express words told us which it is substantially; therfore seeing when he calls it *body*, he is instituting his *Sacrament*, there's all reason in the world he should mean *Sacramentally*; since 'tis the most proper meaning: and by consequence 'tis bread *substantially*, as all waies of ^{1 Cor. 11:27.} judging in the world assure us. Here's no stress on Scripture, as there is no Principle to serve; when as ~~the~~ other makes us differ, not in Scripture only, even where 'tis plainest; but tradition too. For the most express and evident sayings of the primitive Fathers are on every head of difference, as much the matter of contention as the texts of Scripture are; as it were easy to demonstrate if that were my busines. So that it is meer deceit to lay our quarrels to defects in Gods word, and particularly to its obscurity, which a man would think were evident enough from this

And Usefulness of Holy Scripture. 41

this that *Children knew it*. The last thing I am to speak to.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

I cannot pass this, that it is St *Chrysostom*'s observation, that *Timothy* was nurst up in the Scriptures from his childhood. Yea and since his Father was an Heathen, he must have bin taught them by his *Grandmother Loïs*, and *his Mother Eunice*, whose faith St *Paul* speaks of *2 Tim. 1. 5.* *Children therfore then, and Women, and they sure are Laics, read the Bible.* Yea and since they knew it, they must read it in a language which they understood: and we know where that is unlawful now. If we consider the first prohibition that appear'd in that Church with Synodical authority against such mens having any Bibles in their own tongue, we shall find it was immediately upon the preaching of the *Waldenses*, one of whose doctrines it was,^a *that the Scripture was the rule to* ^{*Uffr. de Chriſ.*} *judg of faith by: so that whatsoever was not consonant* ^{*Eccle. ſuccell.*} *c. 6. §. 17.* *to that must be refus'd.* This they preach't in France and over Europe in the latter end of the^b *12 Cen-*

G

^{*b c. 8. §. 1.*} tury:

tury; and that Council which forbade their having of the Bible, we find lately put forth by the frier ^c D. Achery as held at Tholouse in the beginning of the 13th Century. It seems they apprehended then their doctrines hardly would abide that touchstone: And they therefore had no surer, more compendious way for its security then to prevent such trial, taking care men should not know what was or what was not in Scripture. And it is not possible for me to give account why in their catechising they leave out all that part of the commandments, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, &c.* but this only, that they dare not let the laity compare their doctrine and their practice with that Scripture. But tho it is possible they might conceive some danger if the whole Scripture should be expos'd, yet in those portions which the Church it self chose out for her own offices, the *little lessons*, and *Epistles*, and *Gospels*, those sure one would think were safe: no, not their *Psalter*, *Breviary*, nor their *Hours of the Blessed Virgin* must they have translated in their own tongue; as that ^a Council did determin. And truly when the Roman Missal was turn'd lately into French, and had bin allow'd to be so by the general Assembly

^a *Spicileg. tom.*
2. p. 624.

^b cap. 4.

bly of the Clergy in the year ^a 1650. and when it was don it had the usual approbation of the Doctors and some Bishops, and then was printed at Paris with the license of the Vicars general of their Archbishop. Yet another general assembly of the Clergy the year 1660, whereat there were ^b 36 Bishops, upon pain of ^c excommunication forbid any one to read it, and condemn not only that present traduction, but the thing in general as ^d poysonous, in an Encyclical Epistle to all the Prelates of the Kingdom: and in ^e another they say of him that did translate it, and the vicars general that did defend him in it, that by doing so they did take armes against the Church, attauating their own Mother (namely by that version) at the Altar, in that sanctuary, that closet of her spouses mysteries to prostitute them: and in ^f another Epistle they beseech his Holiness Pope Alexander 7th to damn it not in France alone but the whole Church; which he then did by his ^g Bull, for ever inter dicting that or any other version of that book, ^h for

^a Ordonnance de Messieurs les Vicaires Generaux de Monseigneur l'Eminentissime Cardinal de Retz Archeveque de Paris, which is in the 137th page of the Extract du Procès verbal de l' Assemblée general du Clerge de France, tenué à Paris en l'année 1660. ^b 128 of that extract.

^c Ibid. p. 128. ^d p. 139.

^e p. 130. ^f p. 141. ^g Le: enfans de nostre mere ont pris les armes contre nous, ils la zone attaquer jusqués dans le Sanctuaire des Mystères de son Espouse pour les profiter.

^h p. 132. ⁱ p. 147 and the same bull is printed in the Index of prohibited books set out by the command of Alex. 7. at Rome 1664. p. 382.

^a Missale præsumptum Gallico idiomate conscriptum vel in posterum alias quamodolibet conscribendum & evul- gendum perpetuo damnamus, reprobamus, & interdicimus ejusque impreßionem, lectionem & retentionem universi & singulis utriusque sexus Christi fidelibus, cuiuscunque gradus, ordinis, conditionis existant, sub pena excommunicationis late sententia ipso jure incurriendo perpetuo prohibemus: mandamus quod statim quicunque illud habuerint, vel in futurum quodcumque habebunt realiter & cum effectu ex- hibent & tradant locorum Ordinariis vel inquisitoribus, qui nulla interposita mora, exemplaria igne comburant, & comburi faciant.

bidding all to read or keep it on severest paines; commanding any one that had it to deliver it immediately to the Inquisitor or Ordinary that it might be burnt forthwith. Now thus (whatever it be otherwise) the mass is certainly a sacrifice when 'tis made a burnt offering to appease his holiness's indignation: when that very Memorial of Christ's passion again suffers, and their sacred offices are martyr'd. To see the difference of times; 'twas heretofore a *Pagan Dioclesian*, a strange prodigy of cruelty, who by his edict did command all Christians to deliver up their Bibles or their bodies to be burnt: 'Twas here his *Holiness*, *Christ's Vicar*, who by his Bull orders all to give up theirs, that is all of it that they will allow them, and their praiers also, that they may be forthwith burnt, or themselves to be excommunicated, that is their souls to be devoted to eternal flames. And whereas then those only that did give theirs up were excommunicate, all Christians shun'd them as they would the plague; and multitudes, whole regions rather gave themselves up to the fire to preserve their Bibles: now those only that have none, or that deliver up theirs, are the true obedient sons of that

that Church, and the thorough Catholics. I know men plead great danger in that book: it is represented as the source of monstrous doctrines and rebellions. I will not say these men are bold that take upon them to be wiser then Almighty God, and to see dangers he foresaw not, and to prevent them by such methods as thwart his appointments; but I will say that those who talk thus certainly despise their hearers; as if we knew not Heresies were hatcht by those that understood the Bible untranslated: and as if we never heard there were rebellions among them that were forbid to read the Bible. For if there were a *Covenant* among them that had it in their own tongue, so there was an *Holy League* amongst those men that were deni'd it. While those that had the guidance of the subjects conscience were themselves subject to a forreign power, as all Priests of that communion are, How many Kings and Emperors have there bin that did keep the Scriptures from their people, but yet could not keep their people from sedition, nor themselves from ruine by it? In fine when God himself for his own people caus'd his Scripture to be written in their own tongue, to be weekly read in public to, and day and night

in private by the people; and when the Apostles by the inspiration of the *Holy Ghost* indited Scripture for the world, they did it in the language that was then most vulgar to the world: what *God* and the *Holy Spirit* thus appointed as the fittest means for the Salvation of the world, to define not expedient, as the *Holy Fathers of Trent* did, looks like blasphemy against *God* and the *Holy Spirit*. But blasphemies of this kind are not to be wonder'd at from that kind of men, that call the

^a *Pigh. 3. de
hier. Ecc.*
^b *Eccius.*
^c *Pigh. de hier.
l.1.c.2. fol. 8.*
^d *Idem Pigh.*
^e *Vid. Chemn.
examen de S.
Can. p. 47.*
^f *Peres. de tra-
dit. par. 1. affert. vil.*
^{3.}

Scripture a *dumb* ^a *judg*, ^b *a black Gospel*, *inciken Di-
vinity*, ^c *written not that they shoud be the rule of
our faith and Religion, but that they shoud be regu-
lated by*, *submitted to our faith*; ^d *that the authority of
the Church bath given canonical authority to Scri-
ptures, and those the chief, which otherwise they had
not neither from themselves nor from their authors;*
*And that if the Scriptures were not sustain'd by the
authority of the Church they would be of no more value
then Æsops ^e *fables*.* ^f *And lastly, that the people are per-
mitted to read the bible was the invention of the De-
vil.*

But to leave the controversy and speak to the advantages which may be had from early institution in the Scripture; 'tis so evident that I need

not

not observe how 'tis for want of principles imprest and wrought into the mind in Childhood, that our youth is so licentious. And 'tis not possible it can be otherwise, when they have nothing to oppose to constitution, when tis growing, and to all the temptations both of objects and example; no strict sense of duty planted in them, no such notions as would make resistance to the risings of their inclination, and seducements of ill company: and they therefore follow and indulge to all of them. And in Gods name why do parents give their Children up to God in their first infancy, deliver him so early a possession of them? as if they would have Religion to take seizure on them strait, as if by their baptizing them so soon, they meant to consecrate their whole lives to Gods service, make them his as soon as they were theirs, as if they had bin given them meerly for Gods uses? And they therfore enter them into a vow of Religion almost as soon as they have them: why all this? if accordingly they do not season and prepare them as they shall grow capable. Why when they are but newly born their children, do they take care they shall be regenerate and born again Gods children? if they do not furnish them with

with necessaries, educate them into all the qualities and hopes that appertain to the condition of Gods children, as well as they do to that of their own. That parent which not only, like some delicate ones refuses her own breasts to her own infant, but provides no other to sustain it; that does only wash her babe from i'ts first blood and uncleanness to expose it the more handson prey to wolves and tigers in the desert, is more savage then those tigers: ^a even the sea monsters draw out the breasts, they give suck to their young ones; saith lamenting Jeremy, but he adds the daughter of my people is cruel like the Ostrich in the wilderness;

^b Job. 39. 14. ^c 1 Pet. 2. 2. ^b which leaveth her eggs in the earth; and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them, shee is hardned against her young ones: such are they who when their children are so born again to God, yet as they shall wax capable provide not that which St Peter calls the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby: but from their being washt so in the laver of regeneration, take no more care, but expose them forthwith to such lusts and conversations, as are much more wild and savage then those beasts in the comparison; to which they cannot choose

choose but be a prey. They strive indeed, they say, to educate them into men betimes, that is, make them converisible and bold; and since for that they must engage them into frequent company, where they see and hear mens follies, that I say no worse; by that means they come to have their understandings stor'd with nothing but the Modes, and sins of conversation; fill'd with froth and puddle; men betimes only thus, as they have forwarded their inclinations to, and got an early understanding and experience of, those vices, which one would think men only could be equal for. But by this means the mind, that only part that makes us be men, is not only not improv'd, but dwarf'd. They do not only still continue children in their understanding, as to any thing that's real and solid; but the hopes of reason are destroy'd in them, and its growth kill'd, by turniug all its nurishment to feed the beast part; and the Christian is quite starv'd. There needs no other cause be given for the most part, why so many men have no Religion, own being Libertines, and profess vice; for want of education they have nothing in them that does check this, for they had no principles of a Religion instil'd into them. And if at any time

it comes to pass that they think it is their interest to take upon them the profession of some Religion, they therefore, since they have no Principles nor rules to judg by, are most apt to choose to profess that Religion, which is like to be most gentle to the courses they have steer'd, and are engag'd in. Now that men hope to find such an one, (whether by its constitution I shall not enquire but,) by i'ts practice is but too appaernt. Accordingly when they go over to it, they carry with them, and preserve in it the vices of their no Religion; and by consequence they went not over seriously for Religion: and are therfore so much worse now then when they own'd no Religion, that they do their wickednesses with certainty of easy absolution, and so hopes of salvation; and by this are likely to be made twofold more children of Hell then before: and let them triumph in such conquests. Ther's nothing in the world that contributes so much to this as mens being not acquainted early with, instructed in, those divine rules and obligations to piety and virtue, which this book the Bible does afford. If men had bin season'd first with the knowledg and the sense of duty, with the comforts that are in it, with the

appre-

apprehensions of great blessings that attend it; and the mischiefs that are consequent, indeed essential to impiety and vice here; and their minds were furnish'd with examples of both, which this book abounds with; and their hearts too rais'd with expectations of far greater blessedness in a life hereafter, and with the belief that both that blessedness and life shall have no end: and were made sensible also of strange dreadful torments that await the breach of duty, which shall also last for ever: If these impressions I say, did prevent all other, and take up the mind, and had in them the stamp and character of God, and so there were a reverence and awe of him wrought in them, and they lookt upon him as concern'd in all this; how it was his word that said it; and these sentiments were grown into the very habit of their mind; as it would not be easy to corrupt or soften such, so 'twould be much more difficult to shake them, since their faith is founded on *the rock of ages*. Besides the Holy Scriptures carry in them such an obligation of adhering to them, and to them alone, since they are sufficient to make us wise unto salvation, and are Gods word, that men would not be apt to exchange them for Legends, pious forgeries, for things that can make

good no certain title from the Lord: for let them shew an equal derivation of it, bring it down through all the ages aewe have don the Scriptures title to him. Otherwise it justly may provoke Gods exclamation in the Prophet ^a “*Jeremy: Be asto-*

^a *Jer.2.13.*

“*nisht O ye Heavens, and be horribly afraid, be*
 “*yee very desolate; saith the Lord, for my people*
 “*have committed two evils, they have forsaken*
 “*me the fountain of living waters, and hew'd*
 “*them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold*
 “*no water: cisterns therfore that may leave them*
 “*in a state to want a drop of water, when their*
 “*tongue shall be horribly tormented: whereas he*
 “*that drinks that living water which Christ gives,*
 “*bis^b word, shall never thirst, but it shall be a well of*
 “*water in him springing up to everlasting life.*

^b *Joh. 4.14.*
 compard with
2.6.34.

F I N I S.

one year is enough for the making of a good book
 the other is but a week, when the author is not in a fit
 condition to write, and can not write, for want of
 leisure, and by this I mean a week in a year, a
 book

2. II

